

MEMORANDUM

June 6, 2000

TO: CALFED Policy Group
FROM: ERP Focus Group
RE: Executive Summary

This memorandum provides a summary of the final consensus recommendations of the Ecosystem Restoration Program (ERP) Focus Group¹. This executive summary memorandum is supported by three more detailed memorandums describing the deliberations and findings of the group. An outline of these three memorandums and their associated attachments is attached to this memorandum.

ERP Focus Group Mission

The ERP Focus Group was convened by CALFED in October 1999 *"to assist CALFED in the period prior to the Record of Decision to identify, address, and resolve key policy issues associated with the ERP and its implementation"*. The paramount issues addressed by the group included:

1. **Program Integration:** How do we ensure that the Ecosystem Restoration Program, the Multi-species Conservation Strategy, the Environmental Water Account, and other CALFED, and CALFED related, programs and actions are well integrated and working together?
2. **Priority Setting:** How should decisions be made to set priorities, select Stage I actions, evaluate results and refine the longer-term implementation strategy?
3. **Strategic Objectives:** How can CALFED better define success, as described in quantifiable objectives and performance measures?

¹ The ERP Focus Group is a joint agency/stakeholder policy forum involving the following individuals and organizations: Margit Aramburu, Delta Protection Commission; Gary Bobker, The Bay Institute; Mike Bonner, U.S. Army corps of Engineers; Byron Buck, California Urban Water Agencies; Steve Johnson, The Nature Conservancy; Dan Keppen, Northern California Water Association; Laura King, San Luis Delta Mendota Water Authority; Patrick Leonard, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Dave Nesmith, Save the Bay; Tim Ramirez, Resources Agency; Pete Rhoads, Metropolitan Water District of Southern California; Steve Shaffer, CA Department of Food and Agriculture; Lawrence Smith, U.S. Geological Survey; Gary Stern, National Marine Fisheries Service; Frank Wernette, CA Department of Fish and Game; Leo Winternitz, CA Department of Water Resources; Steve Yaeger, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers; Carolyn Yale, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

Consensus Recommendations

The ERP Focus Group recommends that CALFED:

1. Commit to the concept of a single blueprint² for ecosystem restoration and species recovery in the Bay-Delta System³. Such a blueprint can be the vehicle for ensuring coordination and integration; not only within the CALFED Program, but between all resource management, conservation, and regulatory actions affecting the Bay-Delta System. It is a key ingredient for a successful and effective restoration program, and thus should be referenced in the Record of Decision.
2. Establish ERP priorities, both short and long-term, in a coordinated and integrated fashion with other CALFED programs and CALFED-related programs, in accordance with a single blueprint for ecosystem restoration, and in conjunction with the CALFED Science Program.
3. Develop a clear, scientifically based process, informed by independent scientific advice and review, for determining long-term ecosystem restoration priorities and applying selection criteria. Establish three distinct levels of planning and decision-making: (1) programmatic; (2) regional, or Eco-Zone plans; and (3) site specific projects. Apply implementability considerations/criteria at all three levels of planning/decision making.
4. Adopt guiding policy principles for priority setting developed by the ERP Focus Group.
5. Adopt the refined ERP strategic objectives and rationales developed by the ERP Focus Group and commit to referencing these objectives in the Record of Decision.

² A single blueprint is a cooperative approach defined by three primary elements: (1) integrated, shared science and a set of transparent ecological conceptual models to provide a common basis of understanding about how the ecosystem works; (2) a shared vision for a restored ecosystem; and (3) a management framework, including binding agreements which define how parties with management and regulatory authorities affecting the Delta will interact and how management and regulatory decisions (including planning, prioritization, and implementation) will be coordinated and integrated over time.

³ The term Bay-Delta System as used herein refers broadly to the estuary, its watershed, and factors within the defined geographic scope that influence the health of this ecosystem.

The Record of Decision and CALFED Documents

The ERP Focus Group recommends that material from this executive summary, and the group's other three work product memorandums (as described in the attached outline), be used as follows in drafting the Record of Decision (ROD) for CALFED and in refining/finalizing other CALFED documents:

1. Executive Summary
 - ⇒ ROD
2. Establishing One Blueprint for Ecosystem Restoration
 - ⇒ ROD
 - ⇒ Phase II Document
3. ERP Implementation and Priority Setting
 - ⇒ ROD
 - ⇒ ERP Strategic Plan
 - ⇒ Implementation Plan
4. ERP Strategic Objectives and Rationale
 - ⇒ Ecosystem Restoration Program Plan (ERPP)
 - ⇒ ERP Strategic Plan

ATTACHMENT A

Outline of Work Products

The following is an annotated outline/summary of the work products developed by the ERP Focus Group. These work products consist of four distinct memorandums that can be combined as a package or used independently of one another. Each of the memorandums includes one or more attachments, which provide further details on specific subjects, as noted below.

1. **Executive Summary** - *Summarizes the key recommendations of the ERP Focus Group.*

Attachment A– Outline of ERP Focus Group Materials - *Lists and briefly describes the various work products developed by the group.*

2. **Establishing a Single Blueprint for Ecosystem Restoration and Conservation** – *Provides recommendations regarding program integration and describes/defines the concept of a single blueprint for ecosystem restoration.*

Attachment B – Management Framework for Integration – *Provides a graphical representation and written text describing the proposed management framework element of the single blueprint concept, including identification of key integration decision nodes.*

3. **ERP Implementation and Priority Setting** – *Provides recommendations regarding how to set priorities in implementing the ERP, including a proposed process for planning and decision making, guiding principles for priority setting, and selection criteria for evaluating the implementability of potential projects/proposals.*

Attachment C – Guiding Principles for Priority Setting – *Presents five principles for use in establishing ERP priorities.*

Attachment D – Regional Implementation Plan Development and Project Selection Process – *Presents a graphical display of a five-step process for establishing ERP priorities, including development of regional implementation plans and evaluation of project-specific proposals.*

Attachment E – Proposed ERP Implementability Criteria – *Describes implementability criteria to be applied in evaluating projects for implementation.*

4. **ERP Strategic Objectives and Rationale** – *Recommends adoption of refined strategic objectives and rationales for the CALFED ERP Program.*

Attachment F – Refined Strategic Objectives and Rationale – *Lists and describes proposed ERP Strategic Objectives and their rationales developed by the ERP Focus Group.*